LITERATURE OF THE INTERTESTAMENT PERIOD

The silence of God and of His prophets led to two key developments during the intertestamental period: 1) the decision to translate the Scriptures into the profane language of the Gentiles, and 2) to begin codifying an oral tradition of how to understand the Scriptures.

Septuagint

(a.k.a. “Alexandrian Version”; signified by LXX or Gothic capital G)

I. Origins

A. Dispersion of the Jews

In Alexandria a Jewish quarter was provided for in the new city after the Jews had provided supplies in the siege of Tyre. In 312, 1,000s were carried off to populate and serve in Alexandria. By 200 BC Alexandria boasted the largest Jewish settlement in the world. After 312, citizenship would require fluency in Greek.

B. “Legend of Aristeas” (ca. 100 B.C.); a romantic legend preserved by Philo and Antiquities XII 2:1 and promoted by early Christians like Justin Martyr

1. Principal figures

   a. Aristeas, a courtier of Ptolemy supposed to be writing his brother

   b. Demetrius, the librarian

      (1) Demetrius maintained the largest library in the world

      (a) approaching 500,000 volumes
      (b) papyri embargoed to Asia Minor; Pergamos counters with production of vellum

      (2) alleged to have requested OT scriptures
c. Ptolemy Philadelphus (285-247)

(1) Patron of the arts who was supposed have plied the translators with questions for 7 days of banqueting
(2) Supposed to have freed 110,000 Jewish slaves in gratitude for the massive translation

d. Eleazar the High Priest

e. 72 elders from Palestine, six from each tribe; cf. 70 elders of Moses

2. Substance

a. Pentateuch allegedly translated in 72 days on the Island of Pharos

b. Ex. 24:1,11: “not one perished” vs. LXX reading of “not one disagreed” (diaphonesen), a cryptic reference to the miraculous translation

3. Actually, the “Legend of Aristeas” was an anachronistic Jewish apology to glorify the Jewish race and to present an apology to the Gentiles for the LXX

a. Inaccuracies

(1) Demetrius the Librarian was actually later

(2) Place names in LXX suggest the Maccabean period—not an earlier time of 250

(3) Ptolemy’s insecure questions belie a later, tottering empire

b. Credibility/Accuracies of the letter

(1) LXX really was an Alexandrian production; definite Egyptian allusions, e.g., fashions of Is. 3:18-24

(2) Pentateuch WAS first: these five books most literarily homogeneous

(3) Probably during the reign of the cosmopolitan and tolerant Philadelphus

A scholarly attempt to call the LXX “the Alexandrian Version” has met continued popular resistance.

C. Witness of the Prologue (ca. 130 BC) of Ecclesiasticus (180 BC) to the LXX
Ecclesiasticus, written by ben Sirach around 180 B.C., is being translated from Hebrew into Greek by his grandson. He consoles himself by observing in the Prologue the difficulties the LXX translators must have found in translation: “The law itself and the prophecies and the rest of the books have no small difference when spoken in the original language.”

This early statement, of course, helps set an early date for the LXX.

D. Summary of the LXX actual history

1. Alexandrian production of most of the books for Jews and by Jews

2. Pentateuch first (ca. 250); some suggest a beginning as early as 285
   - a. Style akin to III century papyri writings
   - b. Quoted by end of III c.
   - c. Joshua by 200 B.C.

3. Balance by the end of II B.C., probably in [chronological] order of Hebrew writing

4. Apocryphal works ultimately included as part of Alexandrian corpus

II. Importance

A. Preserved Judaism among Greek speaking Jews

B. “Cross fertilization” of Gentile culture

“The most common attitude among Greeks who came into contact with the Old Testament was that this book and the cosmos are mutually related and must be understood together. Whatever they might think about the book, it appeared to be certain that it was a creation parallel to the world itself, equally great and comprehensive, and that both are the work of the same Creator. What other book in history has ever received a comparable verdict among thinking men?”—Von Harnack in Wurthwein’s The Text of the OT

—Note Acts 8:26ff. = Ethiopian reading Isaiah

C. The Bible of the early church

1. Majority of OT quotes in NT

2. Missionary Bible
a. Focus on Messianic prophecies: Isa 7,9; Mic 5

b. Justin’s “Dialogue with Trypho” challenges Jews for questioning the veracity of the LXX

3. Church Fathers heavy reliance on LXX

D. Textual criticism

1. Ancient witness to OT text, although not the best. The LXX apparently was based on a Hebrew text different from that behind our modern versions

2. Based on Hebrew texts prior to II A.D. authorized edition. Lack of a unified, original LXX text tradition (vortage) makes tracing the original Hebrew a problem
The diagram represents the transmission of the Christian Bible through various translations and versions from the biblical period to the present day. It illustrates the development of the text families and their textual relationships. For a detailed understanding, one should refer to the linked website for more information.
E. A precedent-setting work

1. 1st translation of a major literary work

2. 1st version of Hebrew scriptures, and now in the hands of the common Jew in dispersion

F. Basis of most A.D. versions

1. Theodotian (ca. 160)

2. Old Latin -> Vulgate

G. Extra-biblical works preserved from days of Maccabees

III. Nature of the translation

A. Obstacles

1. Paleographic form of Hebrew scriptures

   a. No vowel points
   b. Vowel letters, as well as waw and yod, often were omitted
   c. Transitional script between archaic and block script
   d. Words not separated with spaces: “GODISNOWHERE”

2. Lack of sound tradition for obscure phrases and words

   a. Sometimes wrong vocalizations, especially without vowels/vowel letters

      נַבְרֶר "flock" נַבְרֶר "plague" נַבְרֶר "word"

   b. Seen through Aramaic and Hellenistic eyes

      (1) No non-pagan theological terms in Greek
      (2) Out of touch with historical context
c. Words change their meanings, and can even turn into opposites as in these KJV words: “let (II Thess. 2:7); careful” (Phil. 4:6)

3. Translating methodology not refined: thoughts to be translated or exact syntax or compromise?

B. Style

1. Koine (“common”) Greek: Bible of the people

2. High levels of faithfulness to the Hebrew (e.g., Torah, Psalter), to loose paraphrases (Daniel, Job)

3. Anthropomorphisms and anthropopathisms of MT were softened in LXX

—Gen. 6:2 – “…the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose.
—LXX: “the angels of God”

—Ex. 15:3 – “The LORD is a man of war…”
—LXX: “The LORD is a breaker of battles…”

—Ps. 84:12 – “For the LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD will give grace and glory; No good thing will He withhold From those who walk uprightly.
—LXX: “For the Lord loves mercy and truth; the Lord will give…”

C. Innovations of the LXX

1. Inclusion of most apocryphal books, although any works originally composed in Greek were ipso facto excluded, e.g., 3 & 4 Maccabees (that made it into the Greek Orthodox Bible)

2. New synthetic book titles based on the book’s theme labeled the translations contrary to simple Hebrew labels

3. Bipartition of longer historical books, necessitated by longer Greek translations with vowels
4. Reorganization of the canonical book order

“The Alexandrian scholars introduced a more literary and symmetrical system, bringing together the books of each class and arranging them with some regard to the supposed chronological order of their authors.” —Thackeray in *I.S.B.E.*

a. Poetic “writings” tucked into the middle between former and latter prophets

b. Other “writings” placed with corresponding historical books

D. Textual Questions

1. Sequence of chapters

–Ex. 35-39: Tabernacle description (chpts. 36-38 in MT), switched with priestly ornaments (chpts. 38-40 in MT). This new ordering by the LXX failed to see the original chiastic structure (see Dorsey, *The Literary Structure of the OT*, pp. 75,77).

–Last half of Jeremiah (=prophecies vs. the nations) reorganized to follow chpt. 25

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MT</th>
<th>LXX</th>
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Archer believes the MT is the final, posthumous edition arranged by Baruch (second ed.: 36:32)

2. Substance

–LXX edition of Jeremiah is 2500 words, or 1/8 shorter than the Massoretic Text
–1/6 of the difficult book of Job is omitted (note 36:32 of KJV)
–many new Hebrew and Greek Proverbs
–151 Psalms

IV. A.D. use of LXX

A. NT

1. A bridge to bring OT ideas and words into the NT

   a. Jehovah ← *Kurios* → Jesus
(Yahweh/Adonai in OT becomes Kurios in NT)

b. Assembly ← ecclesia → church
   (qahal in OT is translated ecclesia by LXX and NT)

Acts 7:38 “This is he who was in the congregation/church in the wilderness with the Angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our fathers, the one who received the living oracles to give to us,
Heb. 2:12 “saying: “I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly/church I will sing praise to You.”

c. Elder ← presbuteros → elder, presbyter

2. Jesus used LXX
   a. From Galilee with Galilean audience
   b. Matthew never uses LXX except in Jesus’ quotes of the OT

3. Luke the Gentile. Most of the preachers in Acts are quoted with the LXX on their lips

4. Paul
   —of 100+ OT quotes, about 1/2 are from LXX

5. Hebrews and General Epistles (to the dispersion)
   —almost exclusively quote LXX

B. Post-apostolic disfavor by Jews
   1. Widespread use by “Christian sect”
      a. Controversial Messianic passages
         Isa. 7:14 = virgin birth of Immanuel
         “[You Jews] dare to assert that the interpretation produced by your [Jewish] seventy elders under Ptolemy of Egypt is in some points inaccurate.” —Justin Martyr, “Dialogue with Trypho,” 68
      b. Christian interpolations hurt integrity of text
         e.g., Ps. 95:10 (96:10 in English): “The Lord reigns…;” added is the phrase, “from the
2. Codification of authorized Hebrew text takes final shape at Jamnia, ca. 90ff. A.D.
   a. Jamnia (“Jabneh” in Hebrew) was not so much a Jewish council as an academy of the Pharisees that was established on the Judean coast after the destruction of their homeland in 70 a.d. Gamaliel II was a leading light.
   b. The LXX text was rejected for two significant reasons
      1) Christians as rivals had hijacked the LXX for their use
      2) Desire to have a Greek version reflecting an authorized Hebrew textual canon:
         a) LXX included extra-biblical books and interpolations
         b) LXX probably based on popular, unofficial Hebrew texts
         c) LXX was too free a translation for Jewish exegesis

3. Resulted in reactionary new Greek versions for the Jews
   a. Aquila, ca. 120 A.D.: Translation too literal and wooden for any use except for textual critics
      (1) E.g.: Gen. 1:1 = “In heading founded God with the heavens and with the earth”
      (2) Always a different Greek word for each Heb. word, i.e., one to one parallelism
      (3) yahweh (יהוה) transcribed as pipi (!) (πιπι in Greek) the reverse transliteration of the Hebrew
      (4) Is. 7:14 = neanos “young woman”

   b. Theodotian, ca. 160
      (1) This was a revision of the LXX, devoid of Aquila’s barbarisms, but with too many transliterations
      (2) The church adopted his translation of Daniel, complete with the three apocryphal interpolations
c. Symmachus, ca. 180: A brand new Jewish translation from the Hebrew

C. Origen’s Hexapla (ca. 220 A.D.)

1. Form: Six parallel versions of the OT text

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<tr>
<th>Hebrew</th>
<th>Heb. Transliteration</th>
<th>Aquila</th>
<th>Symmachus</th>
<th>LXX</th>
<th>Theodotion</th>
<th>Variants</th>
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2. First critical text of OT
   a. Showed accuracy of late Jewish versions
   b. Revision of LXX with critical apparatus

Produced in a scholarly fashion, Origen intended his Hexapla “…as armour for the Christian controversialist in his conflict with the Jews, who were constantly invoking their Hebrew OT and pouring ridicule on their opponents’ maneuvers with the LXX. The object of the [comparative] Hexapla was thus to enable Christians to defeat the Jews with their own weapons and win their respect.” — Rahlf, in the “Introduction” to his edition of the LXX, p. XXIX.

3. Disposition of the Hexapla
   a. Hexapla never produced as one edition. Various portions were heavily cited in Palestinian writings.
   b. Preservation of a single LXX column by disciples of Origen led to our current LXX which is mixed with other versions and marginal glosses. Origen’s textual annotations may have been based on corrupt Hebrew texts.
   c. There are no extant Hexapla mss. Most were probably destroyed around 653 when the Saracens took Caesarea.

Family Tree showing influence of the Hexapla Version of the LXX on later copies
RABBINIC LITERATURE

“Say what you will about that lore, it has its value: of course, a man has to rake among perfect dunghills and dust heaps, but there are a few jewels which the world could not afford to miss.” –Spurgeon (Commenting and Commentaries, p. 15), remarking on John Gill as a “master cinder sifter among the Targums, the Talmuds, the Mishna, and the Gemara.”

I. Targums

A. Definition

“Translation;” paraphrastic translations of portions of the OT Scriptures into Aramaic

Hebrew verb *ragam* means “to pile up stones” (Ezra 4:7), or possibly to cast a stone
Assyrian *rgm* means “to speak aloud”

An example of amplification of the text is Jer. 10:11 which is expanded from 10 words to 57 words

B. Need of Targums: post-exiles spoke Aramaic but not Hebrew

Neh. 8:7,8: “…and the Levites, helped the people to understand the Law; and the people *stood* in their place. So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading.” (NKJV)
NASB has “…translating to give the sense so that they understood…”

C. Use

1. Background

“Although for many centuries it was not considered proper to read in the synagogue service anything except the actual Scripture itself, and the translations were given extemporaneously, usually from memory, in the course of the years these translations or interpretations naturally tended to become rather fixed. However, translations into Aramaic were written down for use by the people at home. By the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D., many synagogues had adopted the custom of actually reading the translation in the service, an innovation at which some of the rabbis were horrified.” —A.A. MacRae. “Targum,” in ZPBE, V, p. 596

Most targums originated in Palestine and were carried to the diaspora where many underwent revision.

2. Method: for the sake of accuracy and to follow the text, one verse at a time was read from the Torah (3 vss from the prophets) before the Aramaic translation was given

D. Value
1. Reveal early tradition of Jewish interpretations of the OT

e.g., “The Lord nourished His people in the wilderness so that they lacked nothing.”
—Psalm 23:1

a. anthropomorphisms weeded out (e.g., Gen.1:26, so that men are created in the image of angels)

b. Messianic interpretations by two key targums from the I century a.d.

   (1) Targum of Onkelos (on the Torah), student of Gamaliel II

      a) Examples that became official by V century a.d.

         Gen. 49:10 – “Shiloh” = Messiah
         Num. 24:17 – “star out of Jacob, sceptre out of Israel” = Messiah

      b) This Onkelos is sometimes identified with Aquila (120 a.d.) who made the literal Greek translation of the OT. His Aramaic translation is also very careful.

   (2) Targum of Jonathan (on former and latter prophets), ca. I A.D.

      Isa. 52:13–53:12 – Messianic interpretation, except most references to sufferings are shifted to enemies of Israel; (see F.F. Bruce, The Books and the Parchments, 143ff.)

   (3) Of interest, there are no surviving Targums for Ezra-Nehemiah, Daniel, and Chronicles, all of which contain numerous Aramaisms

2. Occasionally, Targums shed light on the meanings of rare Hebrew words

   —e.g., Is. 29:1 “Ariel” (“lion of God”) translated as “altar;” also, “Shinar” = Babylon

3. Backdrop of NT theology

   a. Messianic/Jewish background of John

      1) 1:1ff., very common use of the phrase, “the word of the Lord;”
         cf. targum on Gen. 3:8 where “the word of the Lord God” was walking in the garden

      2) three common words found in John 1:14, “word, dwelt, glory”
         –the Targums freely use the term “shekinah:”
         –“the Shekinah will dwell in the tents of Shem” (Gen. 9:27)
         –“Is the Shekinah among us or not?” (Ex. 17:7)
         –“The glory of God went up from Abraham” (Gen 17:22)

   b. Mk. 4:12 follows the amplified targum of Is. 6:9,10 to include beyond the words “be
healed,” the words “be forgiven”

c. Eph. 4:8ff. more closely follows the targum of Ps. 68:18 than the OT text

II. **Midrash** (ca. 100 B.C. – 300 A.D.)

A. Definition: “interpretation, commentary, textual study”

From Hebrew verb, *darash*, “to seek, inquire”
The Midrash consists of doctrinal and homiletical expositions of the OT Scriptures which are largely ancient synagogue homilies (that became official interpretations)

B. Background

Ezra 7:10 – “For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek (לְדֹרֶשׁ, *lidrosh*) the Law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel.

Neh. 8:8 – gave the sense and caused the people to understand…

1. Vanishing theocracy being replaced by times of Gentiles called for new applications of old truths

2. Oral interpretations later codified, A.D.

C. Two components (eventually replaced by the Mishnah)

**Prescriptive** 1. **Halakah**: “procedure, tradition,” from the Hebrew “[the way] to go”

a. Commentary on the Torah only = application of biblical legislation (the Torah) to particulars cases

b. appealed to by Pharisees when the Sadducees rejected the Pharisees’ oral traditions

**Descriptive** 2. **Haggadah**: “narration, declaration,” from the Hebrew “to declare”

a. Commentary on only the prophets and writings: exhortations of devotional, ethical, and theological nature

b. Example: Hosea 6:2 as background to I Cor. 15:4 where the midrash takes this statement
of restoration not as a national event, but a physical resurrection.

Hosea 6:2 “After two days He will revive us; On the third day He will raise us up, That we may live in His sight.”
I Cor. 15:4 – “and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,”

Although this midrash does not comment on “the third day,” the midrash on Esther 1:5 remarks that “Israel is never left in dire distress for more than three days.”
Cf. David’s choice of a three day judgment that appears to have been cut short.

III. Talmud (300 B.C. - 500 A.D.)

A. Defined: “instruction, teaching” from the Hebrew “to teach”

From Hebrew lamad, “to learn, to teach”

Two parts: 1) the codified rabbinical laws with case laws, = Oral Law, and 2) commentary on the Oral Law

The Talmud basically is the Jewish Oral Law WITH Commentary

B. Purpose

“Properly” applying the Mosaic law and serving as a hedge about its sanctity, the Talmud was handed down so that Israel would avoid the idolatry and willful ignorance it displayed in its past. It served as an ethical hedge to preserve the law of Moses.

C. Component parts

1. Mishnah (300 B.C. – 200 A.D.) from the Hebrew for “to repeat”

a. Defined (“repetition, explanation”)

From Hebrew verb, shanah, “to repeat”

Basically, the Mishnah is the oral law of the Jews, explaining the law of Moses in Aramaic. It differs from the Midrash, in that the latter is an exegetical, textual exposition of the law, while the Mishnah is a topical commentary on the Law; it is a primitive systematic theology.

b. Background

(1) Developed early by the “sopherim” (“scribes”) and later by “zugoth” (“pairs”),
the five schools of opposing pairs, exemplified by Hillel and Shamai (ca. 30 B.C. – 10 A.D.)

Much of the Mishnah is dialogue. It is evident that the law was refined through a running debate. Eventually much of the early oral tradition was codified after 70 A.D. at Jamnia.

(2) Jewish claims of its Mosaic origin and authority

Ex. 24:12 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Come up to Me on the mountain and be there; and I will give you tablets of stone, and the law and commandments which I have written, that you may teach them."

Matthew 15:3 He answered and said to them, "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition?

2. Gemara (200 A.D. – 500) from the Hebrew “to complete, bring to an end”

a. Defined: “completion, accomplish”

From Aramaic verb, gamar, “to study”

The Gemara is the rabbinic commentary (Aramaic) on the oral law (Mishnah) which applies its teachings in broader uses, explains its obscurities, and harmonizes its contradictions.

b. Background

The Gemara developed in two separate forms, although both camps used the Mishnah springing from the rabbinic schools of Galilee, particularly Tiberias

(1) Palestinian (200-300 A.D.)

(2) Babylonian (200-500 A.D.) following 2nd Judean Revolt of 135 A.D.

Palestinian Talmud is 1/3 the size of the Babylonian Talmud

3. These two sections are further divided into 6 topical orders, laws pertaining to:

a. Agriculture
b. Sabbath
c. Women
d. Damages
e. holy things
f. purity

These six orders are further subdivided into 63 tractates and hundreds of numbered paragraphs.

D. Significance

1. Sheds light on NT and apostolic age

see Strack and Billerbeck: *Commentary on the NT* from the Talmud and Midrash (e.g., II Cor. 11:24 cf. Dt. 25:3, Mishnah Makkot 3:10a which calls for “near 40 lashes”)

2. Occasionally sheds light on difficult OT passages

3. Origins of modern Judaism

Many modern Jews place the Talmud on the same level of authority as the OT canon [see III.C.1.b.2)]. It would even seem that, as national literature, the Talmud could be more popular with modern Jews than the OT for the following reasons:

The Talmud is

a. systematically/topically arranged

b. a broader development than the Torah

c. not under the same intellectual attack by the Graf-Welhausen theory

Final observation on Rabbinic Literature: Jesus regularly engaged and challenged the Pharisees on the traditions of men allegedly handed down from Moses (Mark 7:7, Matt 15:1,2).
THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

I. Identification

A. The library at Qumran (1947)

Suggestions for the cache:

1. worn out scrolls as in a genizeh (synagogue archive)?
2. hiding place from the Romans?
3. sacred writings, not from Qumran, but from Jerusalem?

B. Wadi Murabbaat (1952)

-Era of Second Revolt, ca. 132 A.D.

1. Letter of Simon bar Kochba to his lieutenant
2. scroll of the minor prophets and fragments of the Torah

C. Khirbet al-Mird (1953)

= Christian monastery, 500-800 A.D. with Christian documents in Syriac, Arabic, and Greek

II. Background of Qumran (“monastery”)
A. Community history

1. Early Jewish occupation VIII - VII B.C.
   — casemate walls

2. Religious community 125 B.C. – 68 A.D.
   — could accommodate 100-200 members
   — earthquake in 31 B.C.
   — Reoccupation ca. 4 B.C.

3. Roman occupation 68-86 A.D.

4. Jewish insurgents 132-135 A.D.

B. Modern Finds

1. Early references
a. Origen (ca. 225) says he found a Greek copy of the Psalms around Jericho

b. Epiphanius (IV A.D.) refers to ancient OT scrolls in Greek and Hebrew in jars near Jericho

c. Nestorian Timotheus (ca. 800) in a letter cites “books found in a house on the rocks near Jericho” including 200 Psalms of David in one book

2. Bedouin treasure hunting - 1947

a. Carpenter and sometimes antiquities dealer Abu-Hanah overlooked 12 year old Mohammed Adib’s scrolls as forgeries

b. Kando the shoe repairman and amateur antiquities dealer

1) Sold four scrolls for $45 to Syrian Orthodox Archbishop Samuel
2) Samuel advertised in the Wall Street Journal and sold them for $250,000 in 1948 to Israeli archaeologist, Yigael Yadin, who brought them to Israel by 1955
3) The other three major scrolls had been purchased by Yadin’s father-in-law in 1948

MISCELLANEOUS FOR SALE

“The Four Dead Sea Scrolls”

Biblical Manuscripts dating back to at least 200 BC, are for sale. This would be an ideal gift to an educational or religious institution by an individual or group.

3. 16 out of 300 Dead Sea area caves have yielded MSS.

a. only 11 complete scrolls; fragments of 400+ different mss. This set off a flurry of treasure hunting; fragments from another 400 scrolls are scoured from the caves of Judaea

b. Cave one

–only one out of 45-50 jars had scrolls
–this jar contained 7 large scrolls, including 1QM, 1QS, and 1QIs

C. Cave four contained the bulk of the library; no jars, only scraps

C. Impact

“The greatest manuscript discovery of modern times” — W. F. Albright

“The most important discovery ever in OT manuscripts.” — G.E. Wright of Harvard
III. Dating the Scrolls

One scholar, Solomon Zeitlin, maintained for years that the scrolls were forgeries. He argued that Israel was too politically unstable for them to have been preserved and that the Jews did not write commentaries.

A.A. MacRae observed that “The scholarly world has passed Solomon Zeitlin by.”

A. Preliminary considerations

1. When were the scrolls copied?

2. When were they deposited? (prior to 68 a.d., with a few later)

3. How did they survive?

B. Methods of dating

1. Paleography: study of hand-writing styles compared to documents whose times are fixed
   - Thickness of the strokes
   - Relation to the writing line
   - Proportion of height to width

2. Archaeology (II B.C. – I A.D.) indicates late Hellenistic, early Roman era
   —pottery and coins

3. Carbon 14 dating of linen wrapping indicates a date around 20 B.C., ± 200 years

   Carbon 14 dating was developed in 1949 at the Univ. of Chicago, just in time for application to the DSS.

   “One of the most frequent uses of radiocarbon dating is to estimate the age of organic remains from archaeological sites. When plants fix atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO₂) into organic material during photosynthesis they incorporate a quantity of ¹⁴C that approximately matches the level of this isotope in the atmosphere (a small difference occurs because of isotope fractionation, but this is corrected after laboratory analysis). After plants die or they are consumed by other organisms (for example, by humans or other animals) the ¹⁴C fraction of this organic material declines at a fixed exponential rate due to the radioactive decay of ¹⁴C. Comparing the remaining ¹⁴C fraction of a sample to that expected from atmospheric ¹⁴C allows the age of the sample to be estimated.” —Wikipedia

4. Linguistics

   a. Vocabulary
   b. Spelling
   c. cf. Nash papyri (10 commandments and Shema from same era, 165-35 b.c.)
IV. The Scrolls

See the Google Dead Sea Scroll Project: http://www.deadseascrolls.org.il/

A. Types of MSS.

1. Biblical
   a. 1/4 of all MSS are OT
   b. All OT books represented except Esther
      (1) Probably as a non-Palestinian production, it was slow to gain popularity and notoriety
      (2) It was used in homes in celebration of Purim
   c. Pentateuch
      (1) most mss closely follow the MT
      (2) many copies of Deuteronomy
   d. Former prophets
      – Samuel basically follows the text of the LXX
   e. Latter prophets
      (1) Isaiah was popular
      (2) Jeremiah = 1/8 shorter like LXX
   f. Writings
      (1) Job = ancient ms in paleo-Hebrew
      (2) Daniel = a common book; 6 or 7 copies dating from 125 b.c.
      (3) 12 different Psalms mss

2. Apocryphal
   a. all 14 R.C. books/additions plus more
   b. significantly, there were no commentaries on the apocryphal works
3. Pseudepigraphal, e.g., Genesis Apocryphon, first Hebrew text of Book of Jubilees

4. Sectarian

   a. “Manual of Discipline” (2 copies)
      
      (1) hierarchy of the “session of the many” described
      
      (2) punishments for infractions of community code
      (see Gaster’s 1st edition of scrolls, pp. 53,54,62)

   b. “Damascus Document”
      
      (1) Many references to Damascus. Some think it could allude to Amos 5:27
          “I will take you into captivity, beyond Damascus…”
      
      (2) found in a Cairo geniza (1900)
      
      (a) The Karaite Jews who had preserved the Document more strictly held to the scriptures while rejecting the authority of most of the Jewish oral traditions
      
      (b) an older fragment from 75 b.c. was found at Qumran
      
      (3) Content
          
      (a) God’s “plan of salvation”
      (b) community rules for members of the “New Covt”
      (c) wilderness living around Damascus till the land of Israel purged

   c. War Scroll” = military regulations for God’s shock troops and mobilization description during 2nd Temple period
      
      (1) =Wars of Sons of Light vs. Sons of Darkness
      (2) war to last 40 years, except combatants able to take off the Sabbath years

   d. 32 Thanksgiving Hymns (Hodayoth) - early I BC
      
      (1) Opening refrain: “I thank thee, Lord…”
      
      (2) Themes: covenant, ethical dualism, predestination
(3) Style = similar to poetry and phrasing of the Psalms; parallelism

e. Jerusalem Scroll

(1) Kando connection: extorted from him by the Israeli army after the ‘67 War

(2) Contents = Jerusalem in the last days; mobilization of the army for the last great conflict

5. Biblical commentaries

e.g., on Micah, Habakkuk, Nahum, Isaiah, select Psalms

a. Approach: short text -> “pesher” (“its meaning is...”)

(1) apocalyptic interpretation (cf. Habk. 1:6,13)

(2) words understood without reference to context

b. Value

(1) Reverence for canonical books only

(2) Text of OT confirmed

(3) Light shed on history and beliefs of Qumran, e.g., Teacher of Righteousness, Wicked Priest, House of Absolom, Kittaens

6. Miscellaneous

a. Copper scroll(s) (2 scrolls, though originally 1); ca. 68 a.d.

(1) Found in 1952 at Cave 3, it had to wait for a 1956 method

(2) Why Copper?

(a) Durable

(b) Ceremonially undefileable
(3) Contents: 60 hiding places for Temple’s treasures
   (a) around Jerusalem, Jericho, and Dead Sea
   (b) 200 tons of silver and 200 tons of gold!

(4) Allegro’s theory
   (a) Tithes hidden for sake of holiness, as well as personal treasures taken to the temple for safe keeping
   (b) Records to lead survivors to treasure

(5) Value
   (a) Earliest extant texts of Mishnaic Hebrew: = Hebrew of Jesus
   (b) Added knowledge of I AD Palestinian topography

b. Temple scroll
   —parallel to tabernacle description of Exodus, supplying the missing temple blueprint; yet different from Herod’s and Ezekiel’s temples

c. Liturgy and hymns

d. Record of priestly courses

e. Solar calendars suggests Persian influence

f. Signs of the Zodiac! (see Burrows, More Light on the DSS, p. 293)

B. General significance of the DSS

1. Better understanding of development of Judaism
   a. Obscure sect’s history preserved
   b. Jewish sectarian literature preserved

2. Light on times of Christian origins
   —e.g., doctrines of John the Apostle; also, washings, spirit of God, new birth, etc.
For examples of how “scholars” have used the DSS to revise history and tradition, see Yamauchi, *Christianity Today*, Oct. 4, 1993, p. 30-i. He cites the “peculiar conceit” of John Allegro’s *Sacred Mushroom and the Cross* theory that Christianity originally was “a disguised fertility cult centered around a hallucinogenic mushroom.”

3. Linguistic contributions

   a. Aramaic of Christ’s day revealed

   b. Antiquity of Daniel confirmed: Differences between Daniel’s Imperial Aramaic vs. Western Aramaic of DSS

      (1) grammar

      (2) syntax and style

      (3) vocabulary

4. Textual criticism contributions

   a. Accuracy of M.T. confirmed

      Regarding 1QIs (St. Mark’s), Burrows writes, “Herein lies its chief importance, supporting the fidelity of the Massoretic tradition.” *DSS*, p.304.

   b. Antecedent and proto-Massoretic texts revealed

C. The balance of the missing DSS that were kept under cover by DSS scholars and their disciples were finally published in 1991 after OT sleuths forced the hands of these recalcitrant scholars.